GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6034
ANSWERED ON:05.05.2003
ILLEGAL POACHING OF TIGERS
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of tigers in the country at present;

(b) whether despite the three laws enacted for protection of tigers illegal poaching of tiger is on the increase;

(c) if so, whether one Indian tiger is killed everyday and is exported illegally for its various organs;

(d) if so, whether the Government have conducted any analysis regarding impact of illegal poaching of tigers on environment and if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to contain this trend?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JU DEV)

(a) According to the estimation carried out during 2002, the estimated number of tigers in our country is 3642.

(b), (c) & (d) No Sir. The 27 Tiger Reserves and many other Protected Areas in our country form natural habitats harbouring a viable, breeding population of tigers, which have responded well to managerial interventions aimed to foster its recovery. However, some `spill-over` population from such areas cause man-wild animal interface problems, which at times may result in the mortality of tiger. The body parts of some such animals may also end up in the grey market.

(e) The steps taken by the Government to prevent this illegal trade are as below:

i) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals including tigers against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act. 1972.

ii) Financial and technical help is being extended to the States under Centrally Sponsored Schemes for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure to provide effective protection to wild animals.

iii) Central. Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders

iv) Ministry of Home Affairs has written to all State Governments to lend a helping hand to the field formations to curb poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

v) A Special Coordination and Enforcement Committee has been set up under the chairmanship of Secretary (Environment and Forests), Government of India for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

vi) In the recent meeting of Indian Board on Wildlife, it was resolved to declare the wildlife and forest as a priority sector and fill up all the vacant posts of the frontline staff immediately and also to provide basic infrastructure necessary for efficient discharge of duties by them.